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ORIGIN SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-06 ADP-00 NASA-04 L-02 /019 R

66631

DRAFTED BY:SCI/SAM:WGBASTEDO

8/3/73 EXT 23622

APPROVED BY:SCI:HPOLLACK

NASA/I:AFRUTKIN EUR/WE:CJOHNSON

EUR/RPE:ALIEBOWITZ L/SCI:EMAURER

DESIRED DISTRIBUTION: NONE INDICATED

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P P 032108Z AUG 73

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FOLLOWING TEL SECSTATE 151578 SENT ACTION ROME 8/1/73 RPTD
FOR YOUR INFO:

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: TSPA, IT

SUBJ: POST APOLLO COOPERATION

1. REPORTS RECEIVED FROM MEETING OF EUROPEAN SPACE CONFER-
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ENCE IN BRUSSELS JULY 31ST INDICATE THAT MINISTERS GAVE

FINAL APPROVAL TO GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT AND AGENCY-LEVEL MOU; THAT THE L3S, MAROTS AND SPACE LAB PROGRAMS ARE INTER-DEPENDENT AND STAND OR FALL AS A UNIT; AND THAT THE ITALIANS WERE UNABLE TO MAKE A FIRM COMMITMENT AT THE MEETING TO THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THESE THREE PROGRAMS. COMMITMENTS OF OTHER COUNTRIES TOTALED 79 OF ESTIMATED COST OF SPACE LAB, 94 OF L3S AND 92 OF MAROTS. (THE DEFICITS REFLECT SUBSTANTIALLY THE PREVIOUS UNOFFICIAL ITALIAN PLEDGES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO PRIMARILY SPACE LABS AND L3S.) THE CONFERENCE ESTABLISHED A SEPTEMBER 15TH DEADLINE FOR THE ITALIANS AND ONE OR TWO OTHER MINOR PARTICIPANTS TO JOIN IN THE COMMITMENT. THE EXTENT OF THE COMMITMENT IS TO BE REVIEWED BY SEPTEMBER 18TH WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IF THERE IS NOT A 100 COMMITMENT TO EACH OF THESE PROGRAMS MEMBER COUNTRIES CAN BE RELEASED FROM COMMITMENTS MADE AT JULY 31ST MEETING.

2. EUROPEAN SPACE CONFERENCE IS PROPOSING THAT SIGNATURE OF GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT AND MOU TAKE PLACE ON AUGUST 15TH AS PLANNED PROVIDED WE CAN ACCEPT A RELEASE CLAUSE OPERATIVE AS OF SEPTEMBER 18TH IF 100 COMMITMENT NOT ATTAINED.

3. ALTHOUGH COMMITTING COUNTRIES HAVE LEFT OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF THEIR MAKING ADDITIONAL COMMITMENTS AT MID-SEPTEMBER REVIEW, IT SEEMS OBVIOUS THAT THE POSITION OF THE ITALIANS MAY BE CRITICAL TO THE SPACE LAB VENTURE AS WELL OF COURSE AS TO THE L3S AND MAROTS PROJECTS.

4. BEFORE DECIDING FINALLY WHETHER TO PROCEED WITH AUGUST 15TH SIGNING WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE AS CLEAR AS READING AS POSSIBLE OF GOI'S INTENTIONS ON THIS MATTER.

5. WE THEREFORE REQUEST EMBASSY APPROACH GOI ON URGENT BASIS AND AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO ELICIT AUTHORITATIVE EXPRESSION OF ITALIAN VIEWS. EMBASSY SHOULD EXPRESS US APPRECIATION FOR CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE WHICH ITALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS CONSISTENTLY PLAYED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED COOPERATIVE SPACE LAB PROJECT. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE ITALIANS, SECOND ONLY TO THE GERMANS, HAVE BEEN THE PRINCIPAL SUPPORTER IN EUROPE OF COOPERATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITH THE UNITED STATES ON THE SPACE LAB PROJECT AND WE HAVE APPRECIATED THE VIGOR AND DIPLOMATIC SKILL WITH WHICH THEY PURSUED THIS OBJECTIVE. (WE THEREFORE STRONGLY HOPE THAT THE GOI WILL BY MID-SEPTEMBER BE ABLE TO JOIN IN THE EUROPEAN SPACE CONFERENCE COMMITMENT IN ORDER TO PREVENT POSSIBLE UNRAVELING OF THE COOPERATIVE VENTURE TO WHICH WE ATTRIBUTE CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL AND TECHNICAL IMPORTANCE. THE UNITED STATES WOULD LIKE TO PROCEED WITH

THE SIGNING ON AUGUST 15 IF WE HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT GOI
WILL PARTICIPATE BY MID-SEPTEMBER.

6. WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING REPORT OF ITALIAN REACTIONS
BY COB FRIDAY, AUGUST 3RD. ROGERS UNQTE ROGERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: worrelsw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE151578
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: SCI/SAM:WGBASTEDO
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730857/aaaabqas.tel
Line Count: 120
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN SCI
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: worrelsw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08-Aug-2001 by willialc>; APPROVED <16-Aug-2001 by worrelsw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POST APOLLO COOPERATION
TAGS: TSPA, IT
To: ROME BERN BONN COPENHAGEN LONDON MADRID OSLO PARIS STOCKHOLM THE HAGUE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005